



Paul H. Mitchell
School Board Member

JOSEPH A. MURDOCH



This is the history of Joseph A. Murdoch and Martha Ellen Fortie Murdoch, early residents of Heber, Utah. Joseph A. was born on March 11, 1870, in Heber, to John Murray and Ann Steele Murdoch, the thirteenth child. Martha was born to Alexan-

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der and Rachel Howarth Fortie on January 19, 1871, in Heber City. She was the second of three children.

They were reared in Heber. Martha was tall, with black eyes and black hair. She attended school until about the fourth grade. Her mother was widowed early and Martha began working at an early age to help support the family. In her youth she was a good horse rider and dancer. She remained a beautiful woman all her life, and had long, black hair, with very little gray in it at the time of her death. Joseph A. was blond, with blue eyes, not too large in stature. He attended all the schools in Heber at this time and on May 21, 1891, in the Logan Temple, he and Martha were married. This couple lived in Heber and became the parents of twelve children.

Their home was busy with so many children, but always open to friends for visits and practices. Martha was a good cook and housekeeper and spent most of her time in the home. The children were taught right from wrong and the standards of the LDS Church. Joseph A. became very active in the community. He worked for the Wasatch Wave, publishers, as a typesetter. He was called on a short-term mission for the Church to Salt Lake as a Temple Square guide from 1904 to 1905. He also studied music at the Evan Stephens School of Music. He attended the University of Deseret and Brigham Young Academy, as well as the Wasatch Stake Academy in Heber. Mr. Murdoch became a music teacher in Heber Valley, traveling from school to school by horse and buggy. Many students were taught music by note for the first time. He started a successful stake choir in 1900, as well as leading the old Second Ward choir. He played the baritone horn in the Heber brass band. From 1906 to 1916, Joseph A. was the Heber City recorder. He was an excellent penman and took much pride in his writing.

In 1920, after having suffered through the flu epidemic, which took their oldest daughter Lecia's life, they moved to Vineyard, Utah, to a farm. This home was one mile south of the big Geneva Steel Plant. Here they reared most of their younger children. They were active in both the Church and community. This couple were mild kind people, and at the age of 72 and 73,

respectively, they died within five weeks of each other, being buried in Heber City Cemetery.

Children: Lecia, Dona, Murray, Orpha May, Martha Blanch, Joseph Harold, Vida, Mary Gladys, Elroy, Cuthbert Fortie, Phyllis Rachel and Joan.

